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ITALIAN OPERA AT THE FRENCH THEATRE.

Notwithstanding the postponement of Thursday, the opera of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* attracted a large and brilliant audience to the French Theatre on Saturday evening. The temperature was, fortunately, delightful, the prices were very moderate and the company known as excellent, a combination which the public was not slow to recognize. The opera of "The Barber" is generally announced as "immortal," and justly so, if eternal freshness is an attribute of immortality. There is so perfect an adaptation of the sound to the sense, that it would seem impossible to suggest or imagine an improvement. The music is characteristic in the highest degree, true to the individual and the locality, whether it be the mercurial tra-la-la vivacity of the Barber, or the metaphysical profundity of "La Colunnia." In construction it is a model of perfection; its ensemble numbers are masterpieces in dramatic power, in individuality and variety, in freshness and beauty of melody, and in brilliant and sterling instrumentation. The Barber is an opera for all time, and the oftener it is heard the stronger its influence grows, for familiarity in this case creates admiration and respect.

The performance of "Il Barbiere" on this occasion, was not all that could be desired, but in many respects it was most excellent, and was generally very enjoyable. The Rosini on this occasion, was the beautiful Madame Boschetti, whose personation of Marguerite in *Faust*, and the Page in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, made her so popular last season. It is needless to say that she looked charming and acted delightfully. Her natural gracefulness gives a rounded beauty to every action. As a vocalist she has many points of excellence. Her intonation is true, her enunciation

clear, her bravura execution is brilliant and rapid, and in point of taste there is little to cavil at. Her method is French, and her voice exhibits the peculiarities of voices trained in that school, and consequently lacks that sympathetic roundness developed by the Italian method—not that Boschetti's voice is deficient in that quality on all points, for there are phases of her singing in which pathos and expression are markedly manifest. There is a want of sharpness and decision in her execution of the small graces of the art; the simple turn and the common grupetti are frequently executed in a slovenly manner, while the scale and arpeggio passages of great difficulty are rendered with remarkable brilliancy and aplomb. Neatness and precision in the execution of the smaller graces are infallible signs of the thoroughly educated artist. Still, Madame Boschetti sang her role most pleasingly; she was faithful to her author, and threw over the whole a special fascination of simplicity and natural coquetry.

The music of *Almaviva* demands for its perfect rendering that species of education which is rarely afforded now. Pathos, passion and power are the necessities of the present day, so that the polished, but colder graces of art have become a secondary consideration. We would not have the latter the sole aim at the expense of natural emotion, but a blending of both is imperative to the production of a perfect artist. Signor Tamaro rendered the florid music of *Almaviva* with more grace and ease than we expected. The execution was rather heavy, but it was faithfully performed. With the exception of an occasional indulgence in that ah-ah style, which is supposed to simulate passion, his performance of the character, vocally and dramatically, was very acceptable.

Signor Orlandini's Barber was excellent. It was a spirited personation, active, lively and busy, he pervaded the scene with his presence and carried out the character of the clever intriguer very faithfully. He was somewhat deficient in elasticity and in rapid fluency in the parlando, but he sang the music most artistically, and carried the audience with him by his unflagging humor.

The Don Bastile of Carl Formes was a perfect bit of acting throughout. In fact it was a character which only a great artist could portray. His singing of that remarkable aria "La Colunnia," was a masterpiece of dramatic expression, and won for him cordial and long continued applause. His personation of this character was a decided success, and cannot fail to influence the success of the opera.

Signor Barilli's personation of Dr. Bartolo was most excellent. Both in the singing and the acting it was artistically conceived and spiritedly executed. All the artists seemed to feel an interest in the success of the undertaking, and exerted themselves *con amore* to secure it. We think that these efforts were

not thrown away, for they were repeatedly called before the curtain, and a feeling of pleasurable content seemed to pervade the audience.

The chorus was good in material and sang fairly, but will, doubtless, be far more efficient in a repetition of the opera. The orchestra, well, that was pretty bad in some respects. The contrabassi seemed to be playing upon old tubs with cotton strings and reading their parts backward. This department of the orchestra was irredeemably execrable. This must be changed at once (a change in one or two of the wind instruments would also be advisable), and the orchestra should have its full complement, so that no harmony is necessarily emasculated. At least four more violins should be added, to obtain the effective brilliancy required. There should be no niggardliness in this department, for the best efforts of the singers are dependent, in a great measure, upon the orchestral support they receive. A few dollars more in this department are sure to be most effectively spent.

Under all the circumstances we must say that the first performance of "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" was very successful.

The opera of "Faust" is in preparation, and will soon be produced. Mr. Draper, the manager, is also in treaty with a lady of rare personal attractions and vocal ability, who will probably debut in "Rigoletto," and afterward sustain certain roles in English Opera, which will shortly be produced.

The opera of the "Barber of Seville," which has proved so successful, will be repeated tomorrow, Friday evening, with the same admirable cast. Novelties are in preparation, which will be speedily announced.

OPENING OF THE CONCERT SEASON—IRVING HALL.—Mr. Harrison of Irving Hall is, as usual, the first in the field, and opens his beautiful Room to the public on Saturday evening next, September 1st, on which occasion a fine concert will be given, for which the following artists will be engaged: Miss Kate Macdonald, Master Mollenhauer, Mr. Wm. Castle, and Mr. S. C. Campbell. Director Mr. Colby.

On Sunday, Sept. 2d, Mr. Harrison's popular Sunday evening Concerts will commence. They will be continued through the entire season, and the very best available talent will be engaged. Next Sunday evening the following popular artists will appear: Miss Kate Macdonald, Miss Matilda Toedt, Mr. Castle and Mr. Campbell.

THEO. THOMAS' SUMMER CONCERTS.—These delightful entertainments will be given every evening next week. Their success continues unabated, fashionable audiences crowding Terrace Garden each evening. If the weather is unpropitious, the concert is given in the large hall attached to the Garden.